



# DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

**Dale J Schmidt** Sheriff **Scott Mittelstadt** Chief Deputy

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Dodge County Sheriff's Office will always investigate reported threats to determine credibility

Today an article was posted on [empoweringwisconsin.org](http://empoweringwisconsin.org) regarding a recent unsubstantiated threat reported to the Dodge County Sheriff's Office. The article was also discussed on area radio talk shows as a topic of conversation. Unfortunately, while Sheriff Dale Schmidt spoke directly to the author of this article regarding this incident, none of the Sheriff's comments explaining the situation were included. Sheriff Schmidt would like to start by informing the public that the Dodge County Sheriff's Office will always investigate any reported threat regardless of who reportedly made that threat or who the subject of the threat is. We do not ask or care about anyone's political affiliation while conducting an investigation, just as we do not judge someone based on the color of their skin. To not investigate would be irresponsible and could pose a risk to public safety. Yes, it was an anonymous tip, but we follow up on all tips regardless if they are anonymous or not.

Consider for a moment if law enforcement did not investigate a threat and something tragic occurred, there would be a public outcry, scrutiny, and media attention demanding why actions were not taken. We have all seen the scrutiny that different political factions have brought on law enforcement agencies implying (usually incorrectly) that they did not do their job. The Dodge County Sheriff's Office will do everything possible to ensure those implications are not made against our staff.

In the interview that Sheriff Schmidt had with the reporter who authored this article, Sheriff Schmidt stressed the above fact, yet none of that information was included in the article. Sheriff Schmidt also emphatically stressed that the threat received was quickly investigated and it was determined that there was absolutely no credible threat. Again, none of the Sheriff's statements were included in the article. A link to the Sheriff's Office report was in the article which did state the threat was determined to not be credible, but it certainly was not highlighted as it should have been.

It seems that sheriff's office employees have been criticized for their response to this incident. We believe that we are being criticized simply because 3 uniformed deputies responded. It is important to clarify that this was a report of suspicious activity and most times we will send back up with our primary investigating deputy to any suspicious activity report. Law enforcement often has no idea who they are dealing with, nor do we know if we are potentially walking into dangerous circumstances. Put yourself in the position of a deputy for a moment. You are responding to an incident and you don't know who the people are, if a reported threat may be credible, or how those individuals might act when confronted about it. Would you feel comfortable going by yourself to make contact knowing that law enforcement officers are attacked from time to time in situations like this? This requires that our staff have a backup deputy when making contact. In this case, the only reason there were 3 deputies rather than 2 was that one of those backup deputies is currently in training and he was merely there to learn from the other seasoned deputies. Yes, it may seem like there are more deputies there than necessary, but on the job training is simply part of training a new employee in any job or career.

It is the Mission Statement of the Dodge County Sheriff's Office to safeguard the lives, property, and constitutional rights of its citizens through honest, ethical, and professional service to the community. As such we will always do what is necessary to ensure the safety of our citizens. Furthermore, Sheriff Schmidt will never allow anyone to have their constitutional rights trampled. "While there is a great deal of political rhetoric occurring in our country right now, no political faction will ever influence our Office's operations." Sheriff Schmidt says, "We will follow the law as we conduct our investigations and we will do whatever we can to ensure everyone makes it home safely to their families at the end of every day."

The Dodge County Sheriff's Office has respect for all people, including the subject who was falsely accused of being a threat. However, not initiating an investigation would have been negligence at best. Sheriff Schmidt has reviewed the actions of the deputies involved and has found that they have acted appropriately, professionally, and as expected. He fully supports how this incident was handled and would like to remind all citizens that law enforcement work is a very difficult job. At times people may not always feel great about an interaction with a law enforcement officer due to the nature of the contact that needs to take place, but we always strive to ensure everyone is treated fairly and with respect as was done flawlessly by the deputies involved in this incident.

Questions may be directed to Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt.

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